

NEWS RELEASE

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CENTRAL DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS



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Christian County Farmer Charged with Defrauding Government Farm Program

Springfield, IL- The United States Attorney for the Central District of Illinois, Rodger A. Heaton, announced that a federal grand jury today returned an indictment against Ronnie E. Deal, age 63, of Morrisonville, Illinois. The indictment alleges that from the spring of 2002 until August 2002, Deal sold corn, without authority or authorization, that he had pledged as collateral for a \$251,550 loan he had received through the Commodity Credit Corporation.

The charges are the result of an investigation by the Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Patrick J. Chesley.

If convicted, the offense is punishable by a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a fine of \$250,000. A summons will be issued for Deal to appear in federal court in Springfield at a date to be determined by the U.S. Clerk of the Court.

Members of the public are reminded that an indictment is merely an accusation; the defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

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